



LOGGERHEADLINES

NESTING IN 2008 MAY BE AMONG TOP FIVE HIGHEST YEARS

Loggerhead nesting in South Carolina is keeping everyone quite busy this year. Take a look at the table below for the 2008 nest numbers. It is also worth mentioning that we have had one Kemp's ridley, five leatherback and possibly two green nests this year. Using the June 30 total of 1826 nests, the composite curve would predict 3375 nests for the season on project beaches. Project beaches represent ~70% of statewide nesting effort indicating that South Carolina should have ~4821 nests. Photo of Kemp's ridley by Phil and Mary Schneider.



Projects	2006	2007	2008
Waties Island	N/D	10	3
North Myrtle Beach	ND	ND	2
Myrtle Beach	ND	ND	4
Myrtle Beach S. P.	0	1	4
Huntington Beach S. P.	7	2	4
S.C.U.T.E.	39	27	59
Sand Island	ND	ND	19
South Island	66	32	93
Cape Island	564	174	667
Lighthouse Island	122	61	116
Bull Island	N/D	50	56
Deweese Island	14	3	7
Sullivans/Isle of Palms	9	11	18
Folly Beach	28	15	39
Kiawah Island	115	39	134
Seabrook Island	27	2	35
Botany Bay Isl & Plan	126	59	249
Edingsville Beach	44	35	27
Edisto Beach S. P.	39	33	30
Edisto Beach	24	33	28
Harbor Island	13	7	12
Hunting Island	38	34	42
Fripp Island	19	10	23
Pritchards Island	44	16	16
St. Phillips	N/D	4	
Hilton Head Island	114	54	112
Daufuskie Island	N/D	7	27
TOTAL	1294	719	1826

Data is through June 30 for each year

STRANDING, POST-MORTEM AND REHAB NEWS

Stranding numbers through June ($n = 73$) are higher than 2007 ($n = 52$) but not different from the 10-year average of 74. Of these 73, 12 turtles stranded alive but 8 died shortly after. There were 2 strandings reported January through March, 14 in April, 27 in May and 30 in June. A total of 43 loggerheads, 7 green, 19 Kemp's ridleys and 4 leatherbacks have stranded. By county, Horry = 7, Georgetown = 8, Charleston = 43, Colleton = 3, Beaufort = 12 and Jasper = 0.

Sixteen post-mortem exams were performed on 10 loggerheads (8 juvenile females:1 juvenile male:1 adult male), 2 female leatherbacks (1 adult:1 juvenile), 2 female juvenile greens and 2 juvenile Kemp's ridleys (1 female:1 male). Causes of death include boat interaction (6), acute/unknown cause (4), debilitated "barnacle bill" (3), fishery interaction (2) and pneumonia (1).

A stranded loggerhead turtle was found on Hunting Island State Park on 6/5/2008 with flipper and PIT tags. This turtle was originally tagged on 4/5/2008 at St. Lucie Power plant on Hutchinson Island, Florida by the University of Florida. A green turtle stranded on Pawleys Island on 6/4/2008. This turtle was originally tagged near Price Inlet between Capers and Bull Islands in Charleston County on 11/8/2007 by SCDNR SEAMAP. A loggerhead nesting on Fripp Island on 6/23/2008 had flipper tags instrumented by Amber Von Harten of Pritchard's Island on 7/14/2003.

South Carolina Aquarium Turtle Sea Turtle Rescue Program over-wintered three patients ("DeBordieu", "Wadmalaw" and

SCDNR Marine Turtle Conservation Program



"Murrell") who are still receiving care in the Turtle Hospital. Three new sea turtle patients have been admitted so far in 2008, as well as one diamond-back terrapin who was injured by a boat. The sea turtle patients include "North Litchfield", a loggerhead who was admitted with low glucose and erratic behavior, "Pritchard", a loggerhead that was wounded by a stingray barb, and "Little

Jetty", a Kemp's ridley that was caught by a recreational fisherman at the Charleston jetties. Stay tuned to www.scaquarium.org for medical updates and upcoming release dates. We have also created a loggerhead activity booklet that is filled with puzzles and coloring pages and can be found on the Sea Turtle Rescue Program's web page.

NETWORK NEWS



Carolina's Beach Vitex Task Force:

Please help us congratulate Betsy Brabson, who, on April 2nd, was notified by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that she has received the Regional Director's Conservation Award for 2007. Please continue to report any possible locations of beach vitex by submitting a report form online. It is important that the plant not be removed until it has been positively identified. Please visit: www.beachvitex.org/

Litchfield - SCUTE: In June, Jeff McClary reported that a Kemp's ridley nest was laid on South Litchfield beach in Georgetown County. Kemp's ridleys typically nest during the day as did this one. Mary and Phil Schneider of Pawleys Island responded to the call and documented the event. This is the second known Kemp's ridley nest that has been laid in South Carolina since 1980. The first nest in 1992 in front of Litchfield-by-the-Sea was laid within miles of this year's nest. Jeff has also reported a possible green nest that was laid on Garden City.

Folly Beach: Kudos to team member Sharon Hally and Surfrider volunteer Marty Morganello for working with Mayor Beckmann and City Council to educate the public and remove chairs, shelter frames, and other abandoned gear from our beach. This is a huge step in keeping Folly Beach safe for nesting turtles and emerging hatchlings. THANK YOU EVERYONE! ~ Judy Beahn

Waties Island: Although it has been a slower start up North compared to last season, the Waties Island volunteers are out walking the 2 ½ mile undeveloped, barrier island every morning. It appears that we have only one turtle nesting on the Island so far. Her tracks

The South Carolina Marine Turtle Conservation Program began in 1977 with beach management research. The program further developed in the early eighties with formation of the nest protection and stranding volunteer networks along the coast of South Carolina. Today, the program encompasses research, management, monitoring and education within the local, regional and international communities. We are indebted to the continued passion, dedication and effort of our volunteers and staff.

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The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, disability, religion or age. Direct all inquiries to the Office of Human Resources, PO Box 167, Columbia, SC 29202.

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are small (27 inches at the widest point) and have a distinctive line up the middle (probably caused by a barnacle on the plastron). As of July 2nd, we have a total of four natural nests on the Island and two relocated nests from the North Myrtle Beach area. We are hopeful that we will have a few more turtles make their way to the Island to nest this season. ~ Karen Fuss

The Grand Strand: This season, Coastal Carolina University was awarded a grant by the Army Corps of Engineers to monitor daily an 8.8 mile stretch in Myrtle Beach and an 8.1 mile stretch in North Myrtle Beach. Four undergraduate student interns drive these beaches on Kawasaki Mules every morning to monitor nesting effort. All nests on these beaches are being relocated to Myrtle Beach State Park or Waties Island to protect them from the upcoming beach renourishment project that is scheduled to begin late July. As of July 3rd, North Myrtle Beach has had two nests that were relocated to Waties and Myrtle Beach has had three that were relocated to Myrtle Beach State Park. ~ Karen Fuss

Leatherback Nesting: This has also been an exciting year for leatherback nesting. We have had five leatherback nests laid, one each on Kiawah, Folly, Bull, Garden City and Cape. In between these nests, we have had four false crawls. Clutch sizes of yolked eggs (yolkless eggs or spacers are in parenthesis) were 23 (69), 55 (51), 61 (10), 42 (19) and 37 (~12). Photo by SCDNR shows a yolkless (spacer) and yolked egg side by side for size comparison.



REGIONAL UPDATE

North Carolina - Matthew Godfrey: As of 30 June, NC has received 375 loggerhead nests on its beaches, and 2 green turtle nests. No leatherback nests have been observed this year. In terms of strandings, there have been 240 reported strandings in NC to date. The majority have been juvenile green turtles, which is unusual. Normally, loggerhead turtles are the most common species found stranded in NC. In June, 17 sea turtles were released to the ocean after being successfully rehabilitated. Six nesting females from Bald Head Island will have satellite tags attached to their carapaces this summer. Their tracks can be seen here: www.seaturtle.org/tracking/?project_id=290.

Georgia - Mark Dodd: We are still on track for an above average nesting year, based on data collected through June 30. We predict approximately 1,400-1,500 loggerhead nests in 2008. If nesting does not tail off too quickly in July, it's possible that we could pass our 20-year record nesting season of 1,504 nests. In other turtle news, a green turtle nest was located on Sea Island in June bringing the total to 3 nests for Georgia. Dylan, the loggerhead captive turtle who has spent time at several coastal nature centers and the Georgia Aquarium over the last 9 years, was released yesterday in a media frenzy unparalleled on the Georgia coast. Dylan and other rehabilitated sea turtles released from the Georgia Sea Turtle Center can be tracked at www.seaturtle.org/tracking (select the Georgia Sea Turtle Center Project from the list). Dylan was the closest thing we have had to a loggerhead rock star and was an excellent ambassador for the species and marine conservation.

Florida - Blair Witherington and Allen Foley: 2008 nesting data indicates that Florida is slightly above a 5-year average. There have been 693 reported strandings through May which is just a little above the average. There have been no unusual mortality events this year.

Cape Hatteras National Seashore Beach Driving - In April 2008, attorneys for the National Park Service, as well as the Southern Environmental Law Center (representing Defenders of Wildlife and the National Audubon Society) and local and recreational users of the Cape Hatteras National Seashore, filed a proposed consent decree with the U.S. District Court. If approved, the settlement will end the lawsuit. To protect bird nesting areas, the settlement restricts beach driving areas between March 15 and July 15 and details areas that are restricted. To protect sea turtles, the National Park Service must close beaches to driving from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. nightly from May 1 to November 15 each year.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE SEA TURTLE OFFICE

Upcoming Events

January 17-19, 2009: 29th Annual International Sea Turtle Symposium in Brisbane, Australia. The theme for the ISTS 29 is Creating - Community - Collaboration. For more information, visit: www.seaturtle.org.

Loggerheadlines Available Online

Loggerheadlines can be read online at www.dnr.sc.gov/seaturtle/. Please let us know if you would like to use this resource and prefer not to get a hard copy in the mail. We're always looking for ways to save paper and trees!

South Carolina CTurtle List Serve

If you would like to join this list serve, please send an email to coastbio@dnr.sc.gov.

South Carolina Aquarium Rescue Program Tours

For those who are interested in visiting the sea turtle patients, hospital tours are available on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays at 1pm. After admission into the Aquarium, the price is \$5 for kids under 12 and \$10 for 12 and over. Visit www.scaquarium.org.

Georgia Sea Turtle Center is Now Open

The Georgia Sea Turtle Center on Jekyll Island is now open to the public. Find out more at www.georgiaseaturtles.org



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SCDNR Needs Your Support! Citizens of South Carolina can support DNR through the purchase of the endangered species license plate and Check Off for Wildlife. The Endangered Wildlife Fund is the foundation of support for threatened and endangered wildlife in South Carolina. Look for line 26 on the long form (SC1040) or line 13 on the short form (SC1040A) of the South Carolina Department of Revenue Individual Tax Return form, then complete and submit Form I-330. Help us keep wildlife in your life!

